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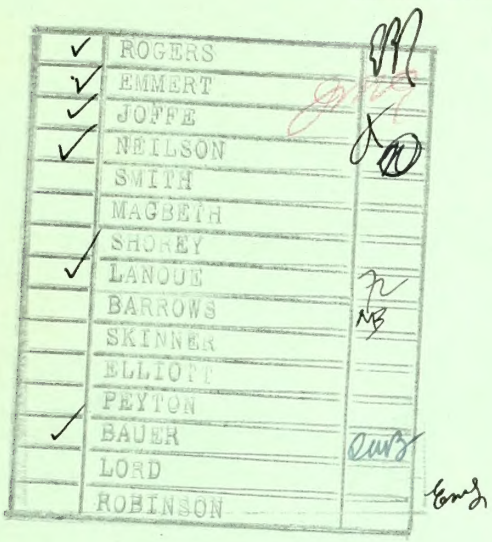
(May 1929)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Yellowstone NATIONAL PARK



FILE NO. 207-02.3

MONTHLY REPORT

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

March, 1942

IMPORTANT

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ARNO B. CAMMERER,
Director.

U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 6—7410

April 6. 1942.

MEMORANDUM for the Director.

Following is the report of activities for Yellowstone National Park for the month of March 1942:

Weather Conditions. Weather during the month was typical for March. The first part of the month was quite warm but most of March was raw and disagreeable with the snow melting not too rapidly. However, by the end of the month much of the snow around Mammoth had disappeared.

The maximum temperature for the month was 49° on the 30th while the minimum temperature was 1° on the 20th. Total precipitation recorded was 0.35 inches. There were 12 clear days during the month, 6 partly cloudy and 13 cloudy.

The following tabulation shows the snow depths in inches near the close of the month for a number of locations in the park over a ten-year period:

ation	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	Average
r	20	?	68	24	19	20	6	8	3	11	19.9
ler	71	15	61	84.1	68	91.4	49	56	40	57.5	49.2
beast	36	30	34	40	42	32	25	23.4	17	29	30.8
atin	36	18	36	36	?	?	12	10	16	24	23.6
	28	16	36	53	35	62	27	28	22	29	33.6
s River											
lvide	106	?	?	?	92	104	89	87	54	45	82.4
oth	0	0	6.8	10.9	1.0	2.0	Drifts	0	0	0	2.0
Faithful	46	20	52	72.5	?	51	21	28	18	27	33.5
s River	59	26	54	80	54	69	46	36	32	40	49.6
r Falls	20	?	12	28	17	21	10	6	8	13.8	15.1
Yellowstone	42	7	41	52	39	51	23	24	30	30	40.9

Special Activities. Superintendent Rogers was in Washington throughout the month on a special assignment. Assistant Superintendent Emmert was acting during his absence. Mr. Emmert made a trip to Helena on the 19th to meet with representatives of a number of government agencies for a discussion of the various phases of the war program. He also made a trip to West Yellowstone on the 25th to look over highway conditions.

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Park Naturalist C. Max Bauer returned on March 9 from a special three months' assignment in Death Valley National Monument.

While the snowplows started out last year early in March to open the roads and had reached Old Faithful on the 18th and West Yellowstone on the 24th they did not start opening the highways this year until the 16th. However, the condition of the snow was such that plowing was quite easy and the plows reached West Yellowstone on the 19th and Old Faithful on the 21st. Travel was permitted over the Mammoth-West Yellowstone road on the 20th and to Old Faithful on the 29th. The snowplows reached Canyon on the 25th and by the end of the month they were at Lake and were making ready to open the section to the east entrance. While the roads are being opened early there has been very little travel over them and it is not expected that they will receive much early travel.

The first real trial of the operation of a snowplane for travel in the park was made by Glen Simmons of the Reclamation Service on March 17. Accompanied by Park Ranger Stevens the couple made the trip by snowplane from the south entrance to Old Faithful in 2 hours and 35 minutes and were at West Yellowstone 7 hours and 40 minutes from the time of their departure. Considerable time was spent at the Old Faithful region in getting the vehicle over the dry ground.

Due to the war and the uncertainty of park travel, a meeting of operators of several of the larger parks was held with the Director in Washington on March 25. The Yellowstone was represented by W. W. Nichols, President of the Yellowstone Park Company, and following the meeting on March 27 Mr. Nichols requested authority to operate only the Mammoth, Old Faithful and Canyon Hotels, the Mammoth, Old Faithful, Fishing Bridge and Canyon tourist cabins and cafeterias and the boat docks at Lake and Fishing Bridge. Authority was requested to close all of the lodges and the tourist cabins at West Thumb and Camp Roosevelt and the cafeteria at West Thumb as well as the boat operations at Thumb and Bridge Bay. The request was concurred in by Superintendent Rogers and it is expected that operations will be carried on for the summer along this line.

Inspections. Captain E. S. Luce, Superintendent of Custer Battlefield National Cemetery, was in the park from March 2 to 10; Woodrow W. Kelly, Field Examiner, 13th Civil Service District, Denver, in March 13 to investigate several former employees; Charles C. Fiske, Junior Engineer, Geological Survey, Boise, in March 14 for water gauge measurements, Frank Childs, Regional Forester, Region Two, Omaha, in and out March 18; Dr. E. R. Quortrup, Fish and Wildlife Service, Brigham City, Utah, in March 22 to test buffalo.

Status of Private Lands. On March 16 the U. S. District Judge, District of Montana, Helena, denied a motion for a new trial in the case of the U. S. vs. Roy E. Armstrong et al. involving 228 acres of land in Park County adjoining the park.

Plans, Maps and Surveys. Work for the most part was of a routine office nature preparing for the coming season and bringing up to date all data on last season's work. Work in the field included topography of the Reese Creek area on the North boundary and preparation of a general layout plan for the development of this area. Supervision of the CCC program also required a considerable amount of work in the field.

General Publicity. Several press releases were sent out during the month but we are somewhat curtailing our publicity program due to the war, the necessity for conserving mimeograph paper and stencils, and the general tendency of the public to criticize non-defense agencies in the expenditure of funds.

Maintenance. The usual patrol maintenance was carried on over the Gardiner-Cooke section and at Headquarters area. Only two trips of the snowplow were required on this section. The usual organization for snow removal on the park road system started operation on March 16. Sections open at the end of this month were Mammoth to West Yellowstone and the section from Madison to Old Faithful. Returning to Norris, the plows started toward the east side and on the last day of the month had cleared the main road to Lake and the various subsidiary and service roads in the Canyon and the Lake areas. Snow depths were considerably more than last year, but conditions have been ideal so that with a two-week later start, we are still nearly a week ahead of last year's schedule of sections cleared.

New Construction. The Mammoth Museum Comfort Station was the only physical improvement project active during the month. Only small crews were intermittently at work on the project during the month, but progress was satisfactory and the Comfort Station will be ready for use for the early season.

Special Improvement Activities. With a limited work strength, fairly good progress was made on CCC projects during the month. The employee's cottage was completed with the exception of landscaping around the house and is now occupied.

Work continued at the quarry site with limited production due to frost conditions, and the crushing plant was in operation with a highly satisfactory output. Crushed surfacing material from this operation is being used on the service road through the employee residential area.

Park Operators. On March 5 our Washington Office authorized the closing of the Haynes Picture Shop in the Mammoth auto camp for the season, due to the war. A request for closing the Mammoth auto camp cafeteria and general store was made by Mrs. Pryor on March 20 and this was approved by the Director on March 31.

The 1942 approved rates for Haynes Picture Shops, Inc. was received on March 9 and for the Yellowstone Park Company on the 30th.

Increase or Decrease in Travel. 587 persons entered the park during March 1942 as compared to 1,918 during the same month in 1941. The total persons entering the park for this travel year to date is 15,779 as compared with 23,300 for 1941 or a decrease of -7,521 people or -32.3%.

313 motor vehicles entered the park in March 1942 as compared to 805 during the same month in 1941. The total motor vehicles entering the park for this travel year to date is 5,038 as compared with 7,041 for 1941, a decrease of -2003 motor vehicles or -28.4%.

Ranger Service. Ranger activities for the month consisted of ski and snow shoe patrol, limited highway patrols over the main park highways, special daily Mammoth area patrols, week-end ski field duty, cooperative State and Federal snow course measurements, park ranger administrative manual revisions, analysis report of traffic accidents during 1941, bison reduction by slaughter, standardization of ranger station first-aid kits, recruiting of seasonal ranger and fire guard personnel, preliminary organization plans for civilian defense, and preparation of plans to conserve all uses of motor vehicles and tires assigned to the Protection Division by limiting hours of use and maintaining reduced mileage quotas although not neglecting the increased amount of protection that the area will require.

Police Protection. No law enforcement cases were held before the United States commissioner this month.

Wildlife Protection and Fish Cultural Activities. Bears. First bear tracks were reported on March 2, and 3, in two different sections of the Lower Falls district.

Bighorns. During the period March 9-12 an attempt was made to obtain a census of the bighorns. However, due to unfavorable weather conditions for counting and the fact that personnel was needed on more pressing projects, complete coverage of the bighorn range was not accomplished. Observations made during this period are set forth below as a matter of record, but the figures should be regarded as incomplete for each of the areas listed. In addition, some important sections of the bighorn range were not visited at all.

Bighorn Observations - 1942

Date	Observers	Counting Area	Rams	Lambs	Ewes	Unclassified	Total
Mar. 6	Stevens	Snake River Sta.	2		1		3
Mar. 9	Coleman	Sect. Mt. Everts	9	4	6		19
Mar. 9	Jay	Sect. Mt. Everts	34	15	6		55
Mar. 9	Skinner	Mammoth-Lava Cr.			7		7
Mar. 9	Jacobson) Semingsen)	Golden Gate			3		3
Mar. 11	Skinner) Marrows)	Mid-Specimen Ridge	7	1	1	2	11
Mar. 11	Art Olson	Deckard's Flat			1		1
" 9-12	Anderson)						
" -12	Watson)	Lower Falls Sect.	17	8	6		31
Mar. 12	Crowell	Druid Slope	2		1		3
	TOTALS		73	32	32	2	139

Subsequent to these observations, district ranger Frank Anderson reported seeing an additional eleven bighorns in the Tower Falls district.

Total known bighorn mortalities this winter are five. One ewe severely infested with scab mites was killed in February and skin specimens sent to laboratories for examination. In March [illegible] a lamb heavily infested with scab mites was killed also and the entire carcass was forwarded to the Bear River Wildlife Disease Research station. Three animals, a female lamb and two rams found during the period February - March, all apparently died from verminous pneumonia, according to laboratory examination of lung specimens.

With the above exceptions, most of the bighorns observed this winter appeared to be in a healthy condition.

Buffalo. Plans for reducing the Lamar Valley buffalo herd by 200 animals were begun on March 6. About two weeks was required to lure the animals into corrals, to accomplish testing and vaccination for live shipments and to arrange for butchering and distribution of carcasses.

The actual butchering process was contracted for a low bid price of $1.25 per animal and this work was begun on March [illegible]. Butchering of the animals proceeded for the remainder of the month at the average rate of 17 per day, as compared to 11 for last year. The carcasses were trucked daily to refrigerator cars at Gardiner. At the present rate slaughter operations will be completed about April 6.

Following the disposal of carcasses, between 17 and 20 live shipments will be made.

Elk. Elk have remained widely scattered over the northern winter range, with some 1,500 foraging outside the park boundaries to the north. Numerous winter mortalities were observed during the latter part of the month and many over-age animals were in poor condition. It is expected that a considerable number of deaths will occur in April and that total winter losses will exceed those of the past two years.

Fish Culture. The 1942 fish planting plan was submitted during the month.

Range Study. The 1941 range study report, prepared by Park Ranger Walter P. Cassill, was submitted in late March. This report was prepared in typewritten form only and distribution was limited to the Washington and Region Two offices.

Forest Fire Protection. Arrangements have been made to hold the civilian defense and fire school on May 11 to 13. Invitations have been extended to officials of the surrounding protective agencies to participate.

Action was taken on one small grass fire (unreportable) near the park line on the Yellowstone River. The fire was one-tenth acre in size and five CCC enrollees were used to control and mop it up.

The final draft for the Yellowstone Fire Fighting Plan and Guide has been read and approved for completion.

Accidents. Two minor automobile accidents occurred on March 26 and both involved a privately-owned vehicle and a Government-owned vehicle.

Miscellaneous. The regular meeting of the Federal Employees Union was held in the Canteen on March 2.

The Local Civil Service Board held an examination for clerk-stenographer on March 10. There was one contestant.

Acting Superintendent.

cc- Region Two Headquarters.